GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

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MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SECTION, GENERAL STAFF

CIVIL INTELLIGENCE SECTION

FIRST OF TWO VOLUMES

SPECIAL REPORT

SAIONJI-HARADA MEMOIRS

PART X

"YEARS OF THE ASSASSINS"

(4 Jan - 9 Apr 1936)
Vol I

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Angus V. Rutledge

ANGUS V. RUTLEDGE
Major, Field Artillery
CIS, GHQ, FEC

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THE SAIONJI - HARADA MEMOIRS
PART TEN: YEAR OF THE ASSASSINS

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Chapter 192
(4 January 1936)

Saito Succeeds Makino

Translated by Lieut. Khe-Beng Chiong

The investiture of three new barons and a new Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal was conducted by His Majesty at 2:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. respectively. SAITO finally became the new Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal to succeed MAKINO. Newspapermen as well as the public were rather surprised; however, on account of SAITO's previous service as Prime Minister, all newspaper editorials described it as a logical appointment. At the same time, the editorials praised the former Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, MAKINO, for his loyal service in the Palace for a pericd of more than ten years. There were many newspapermen who had come over previous to the appointment; however, the fact that there was no leakage of news to any newspaper prior to the appointment gave them a good excuse for not getting the news.

That evening I went to the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal to extend my congratulations. The Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, SAITO, stated: "I received a telegram from the Prince and cables from many others. Please continue your favors toward me."

On the 27th I met the Prime Minister and he stated: "Finally ICHIKI (the President of the Privy Council) has decided to remain at his post , in view of the present situation. I am not very clear on this, but somehow he had been misled by the second official statement; he had felt that the former Prime Minister and Prince SAIONJI wanted him to resign. That was quite a wrong impression

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of course. I am glad that all the misunderstanding has been cleared up." The Prime Minister continued: "His Majesty was quite pleased and satisfied."

On the same day, when I visited the former Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, MAKINO, he stated: "Please excuse my stubbornness. It is a peculiar situation; my sons and grand-children are in retirement while the father and grand-father is still working. Anyway, please send my best regards to the Prince. MAKINO continued: "The key personnel in the Ministry of the Imperial Household at present are better than at any time in the past. As far as the personnel are concerned, there is no problem."

When I met the Foreign Minister afterward, he stated: "There is nothing particular to be mentioned on the Chinese problem. China, however, desires earnestly to: 'talk matters over,' or 'to open a Nanking Conference,' but we are hesitating about giving China any decisive reply, merely stating: 'Let us consider this matter only after anti-Japanese movements are well under control.'"

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Chapter 193
(17 January 1936)

Bellicose Shiratori

Translated by Lieut. Khe-Beng Chiong

When I met the Minister of Railways on February 1, he stated: "KUHARA declared: 'The non-confidence resolution will be based upon the fact that the atttack on Kikan-setsu was not completed, that is, I (KUHARA) do not like the way that the question of the clarification of the national policy (Kokutai Meicho Mondai)*, had been handled by our Government.' For that reason KUHARA intends to submit the non-confidence resolution. However, the majority of the members of the Seiyu-kai are opposed to KUHARA's plan."

*Kokutai Meicho Mondai--Dr. Minobe's interpretation of the position of the Emperor in the Japanese Constitution. His interpretation: "Emperor's position is that of an organ of the State, not a divine figure."

The Minister of Railways continued: "The Minister of War decided to take some action on the case of the 30 army officers, who, together with KITA (Kazuteru) and NISHITA, Chikara, had plotted some disorderly conduct in Shinjuku on December 30 or thereabouts last year. Subsequently, this case has been under investigation. The purpose of this gathering seemed to be: 'To oppose SAITO's appointment as the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal.'" The Minister of Railways and I went on to the subject of the coming election.

On January 6 the Prime Minister stated: "The Director of the Bureau of Legislation is looking for the proper time to resign voluntarily. He told me that he has had

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this in mind for some time. However, I am taking his request lightly." The Prime Minister shifted his conversation into the discussion of various aspects of the coming election. He stated: "First of all, the Diet must be dissolved."

MAYEDA, Yonezo, of Seiyu-kai came over afterward; he stated: "Contrary to the publicity given by the newspapers, actually KUHARA has little political power. Regardless of how little power he has, actually, many people seek every oppotunity to visit him, just because he is somewhat richer than others. However, his actual political power is negligible. I believe that if the Diet is not dissolved, the corruption of the entire parliamentary system is inevitable. On the whole, we demand the dissolution in order to accomplish the total elimination of all undesirable elements. It is essential for our Government to make every possible effort to prevent unqualified candidates from getting elected."

On the 7th, during the meeting with the Prime Minister, he stated: "Still, preparation for the dissolution has to be made. If anyone asks me the main aim of the dissolution, I will state: 'The challenge to our national unity' without the slightest hesitation. On our diplomatic problem, the President of the United States intentionally directed his remarks at Japan and the European nations in his recent speech. Fortunately, his remarks did not cause much of a reaction. The Nanking conference is now in preparation; nothing much is going on in North China at present. According to the Minister of War, in general, the Mongolian border is pretty well under control." I returned after Minister

MACHIDA had finished his discussion of the internal condition of the Minseito.

On the afternoon of the 7th, I met MATSUNO regarding the political influence of KUHARA. His story on KUHARA was very much the same as MAYEDA's, that: "KUHARA's influence in the Seiyukai is negligible." Minister TAKAHASHI whom I met the same afternoon stated: "Dissolution is about the only thing that remains. UGAKI probably is the most appropriate person to be considered as the successor."

During the meeting with the Foreign Minister on the 13th, he stated: "On the subject of disarmament, our Ambassador Plenipotentiary came over and said: 'It is normal procedure to secede from the Conference if our main points are not to be accepted. However, I would like to know in what manner this procedure is to be carried out.' On this point I (Foreign Minister) stated as follows: 'Since our intention is still based upon the idea of disarmament, you may arrange the matter in relation to that idea. If our fundamental concept is not accepted by the Conference and we withdraw from it, you should affirm unhesitatingly that military expansion is still far from our true intention. In any case, try to carry the matter out in a peaceful manner.'" The Foreign Minister continued: "I also indicated that probably both the United States and Britain will watch our moves rather closely, and placed my emphasis on the point: 'An armaments race is still far from our true intention', to our Ambassador Plenipotentiary."

On the 12th, I phoned Ambassador ARITA and told him that I would like to see him. Ambassador ARITA

visited me instead, since he was on his way to the Foreign Ministry. Ambassador ARITA stated: "I received a long letter from SHIRATORI in Sweden, in which he wrote: 'This is the time to open hostilities against Russia. In the future it will be too late. I am sure that both Germany and Poland will join us if we fight against Russia now. We cannot disappoint the Japanese people while they are in a high state of mental tension.' When Colonel SUZUKI of the Tokyo Investigation Bureau inquired of SHIRATORI by letter regarding the general European situation, SHIRATORI again emphasized the idea that we will have to fight Soviet Russia within one or two years."

Ambassador ARITA stated that he had received a written opinion from SHIRATORI who asked him (ARITA) to criticize it. The Ambassador sent the letter back to SHIRATORI and stated that he (ARITA) was opposed to SHIRATORI's ideas on the European situation. Ambassador ARITA continued: "SHIRATORI had much to say on the situation in Poland as well as in Germany; he said: 'I found myself in Germany and Poland to see Brigadier General OSHIMA, and Brigadier General YAMAWAKI. My primary aim was to observe the general nature of European foreign policies. The opinion of these two military attaches was: 'The hostility toward Russia does not necessarily mean that Germany and Poland will fight side-by-side against Russia. Furthermore, when nations such as Germany and Poland are geographically related to Russia, probably they are not too anxious to fight against her. For these reasons, we cannot see any point in Japan, a nation far from Russia geographically, being

so excited about this.' There is an immediate danger in our Russian relations. That is the reason SHIRATORI had been called back to Tokyo."

Although the Ambassador repeatedly stated that ISHIHARA has the same idea as SHIRATORI, I am not too sure of that.

On the 15th, the Prime Minister stated: "Before we forwarded the instructions in response to the request of the Japanese Delegation at the Naval Conference, I was granted an audience with His Majesty. His Majesty stated: 'The justice that we speak about in Japan should not apply to us only. It should be a Universal justice, which will be highly valued by all nations." His Majesty finally said: "I wonder if all Cabinet members will read my last message to the League of Nations at the time of our withdrawal.' This Imperial wish was transmitted to all Cabinet members at the following Cabinet meeting."

I heard that the Ethipian question had been brought up at the last Cabinet meeting by the Foreign Minister. The Prime Minister further stated: "The Naval Conference is not getting anywhere. On the other hand, the Seiyukai keeps asking for compromises. First of all, KUHARA has promised that he will not criticize the Government anymore, and asks the Government to continue without dissolution. Someone suggested that I (the Prime Minister) should go to see OKAZAKI, Kunisuke, but personally I do not think that the visit would help the situation. In my opinion OKAZAKI, Kunisuke is not sufficiently dependable, although he is a fine person."

When I met the Prime Minister on the 17th, he stated: "There will be some unused time during the session

of the House of Peers on the 21st. In order to fill the time until noon, I will have someone ask questions on the Government's policies. Immediately after the Minister of Finance and I finish our speeches, I shall submit the matter concerning dissolution to His Majesty. OKAZAKI is still backing UGAKI to organize the succeeding Cabinet. The general election will follow the dissolution. The nation will be led by a new national Cabinet. There is a general belief in the Seiyukai that a newly-formed cabinet is the only means of handling present problems. KUHARA, who tried to inform the Government secretly through NAKASHIMA, Ryuji, stated: 'Will not make any further comment on the question of the clarification of the national polity. Therefore I wish that the present Cabinet would continue without dissolution.' To this NAKASHIMA told KUHARA: 'You and your wild talk.' KUHARA immediately came back with further explanations and stated: 'I behaved violently, trying to isolate myself from both TANAKA and SUZUKI Cabinets. There is a reason why I act like this.'" The Prime Minister continued: "If the Seiyukai gains a majority in the general election, the non-confidence resolution will be submitted again to overthrow the present Cabinet. In case of a minority, however, the Cabinet will arrange its own reorganization. 'If the dissolution should take place, the Cabinet will be overthrown without any doubt,' KUHARA declared repeatedly."

The Prime Minister continued: "SAITO, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, seems quite worried over recent developments in North China. He said: '30,000 Japanese troops stationed at Shanhaikuan advanced inside the

Wall, thus violating the Imperial Order. We will stir up something in Japan': was the threat issued to the Central Army Headquarters here in Tokyo, if the Central Army Headquarters should interfere with their action at Shanhaikuan. SAITO was quite concerned over this foolish rumour. For that reason I (Prime Minister) plan to see him at the Palace on the 20th." The Prime Minister added: "I intend to send Ambassador ARITA to China sometime about the 10th of next month."

When I met the Minister of Finance at his residence, he said: "OKAZAKI came over the other day on the question of recommending UGAKI as the president of the Seiyukai. OKAZAKI stated: 'Dissolution would be unwise. Instead, it is best to have the appropriation bill passed through the Diet at first and then to have the present Cabinet reorganized. UGAKI, subsequently, becomes the president of the Seiyukai, while I will maintain my position as a prominent figure in the Party.' OKAZAKI's idea is rather annoying", the Minister added.

When I met the Foreign Minister at the Foreign Ministry afterward, he stated: "A firm, fundamental policy toward North China is essential. I am sure that the Minister of War will agree with me on that. The subject of North China has been brought under intensive research. The Army also has been warned on this particular point."

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Chapter 194
(29 January 1936)

Tsurumi on Roosevelt

Translated by Lieut. Khe-Beng Chiong

Owing to his "Wishing to talk over the ideas which he had brought back from America", TSURUMI, Yasuke came to visit me on the 18th. TSURUMI stated: "The present attitude of the American people toward Japan is rather favorable. There is nothing comparable to that during or after the Shanghai Incident. In spite of the fact that the current North China Incident has caused a certain amount of confusion, the American people will certainly have the same degree of confidence toward us due to the fact that we have steadily succeeded in establishing cultural institutions in Manchukuo after the Incident. On the other hand, all negotiations between China and America have ended in some sort of unexpected development and disappointment. This fact has brought us indirectly the favor which I mentioned above. At the same time, judging from the fear of communism in the minds of the American people, they may expect us to stand in the first line against Russia. I do not care what they (American people) say regarding our policy toward China. It was Japan which made the United States the champion of a Far Eastern Policy. At the time when China faced the fate of territorial partition by the great powers some 35 or 36 years ago, it was Japan that saved China from being divided, and that has protected her present independence. It was Japan too, that made it possible for the United States to carry out her Far Eastern Policy successfully."

TSURUMI continued: "Basically, there are two reasons for the American people's fears toward Japan: the

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advancement of Japanese business into the world market, and the application of an extreme dictatorial policy, the so-called 'ARAKIISM'. These two factors are chiefly responsible for the fears of the American people toward Japan. In general, the public opinion of the United States can be characterized as 'extreme pacifism'. The United States learned her lesson from her tremendous losses in the previous European conflict, in addition to her difficulties in war-bond sales. Still, we have to be very careful, since conditions might become dangerous. if a handful of capitalists (the group which makes profits through war industries) should propagandize for war through newspapers or other publications. I met the President of the United States. In my opinion, he is a mediocrity, a so-called 'young buck'. However, the President possesses the ability of judging people and winning popularity for himself."

I went to Okitsu on the 18th. After I made my report on the general situation to the Prince I returned to Tokyo on the 19th. I met the Prime Minister on the 20th. The Prime Minister stated: "This afternoon I am going to the Palace to submit my speech on the Government's policy to His Majesty. The Foreign Minister and the Minister of Finance will also submit theirs, on diplomacy and appropriations respectively, to His Majesty. I shall then report to His Majesty that the dissolution, which will occur tomorrow, is unavoidable under the circumstances. I shall ask for His Majesty's permission to dissolve the House."

Some wild rumors had been spreading since the afternoon of the 20th. Special guards were posted around the

Diet building. The canards became so extreme that both the Chief of the Metropolitan Police and the Director of the Police Bureau had to take special precautions.

I attended the session on the 21st. The House of Peers held a comparatively peaceful session. The presence of Prince TAKAMATSU as a student from the Naval College may have had some effect on the session of the Lower House, which proceeded without any interruption from theSeiyukai. Immediately after the Finance Minister's speech, the Imperial Proclamation of dissolution was read; thus the Diet ended in a peaceful manner. The Government immediately assembled all the prefectural governors, and proceeded with preparations for the general election.

I met the Prime Minister on the 23rd. He seemed quite worried over the diplomatic situation in China.

A statement was made on Chinese and Russian problems by Ambassador ARITA at the official residence of the President of the House of Peers at noon on the 25th. Prince KONOYE, KIDO and five or six prominent financial figures were present during the discussion. Various opinions were given by these financiers; the meeting lasted until 4:00 P.M. It was generally agreed that our foreign policies should be adjusted in such a way that friendly relations could be maintained with China as well as with Russia during the next ten years. ARITA, expressing his ideas frankly, stated: "This plan should not be known to the public yet; please bear that in mind."

From the 24th to the morning of the 7th of the following month, I had to remain in bed due to a cold.

I inquired of all new developments by telephone; however, nothing special was mentioned. The public trial of Lieut. Colonel AIZAWA was held on the 28th. His case was publicized quite extensively in all the newspapers.

The movement to entice the new Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, SAITO, has been intensified. KUROTA, Hideo connected with the incident of the Imperial Rayon Corporation, submitted a written statement to the Minister of Justice, stating: "There is evidence that SAITO, the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, received a bribe." In the meantime I went to see Prince KONOYE, who took this case rather suspiciously. I have no idea who came to inform Prince KONOYE, but I still do not think that the imputation upon SAITO is true. I phoned the Minister of Justice in regard to this, but he does not know anything about the case.

Next day, I went to the Ministry of Justice to investigate this matter. I found that a written report was submitted by the Vice-Minister of Finance during the preliminary trial. The report which was submitted to the prosecutor contained the following information: "Of the total sum of sixty odd thousand yen which had been given to me, I forwarded 40,000 yen to TAKAHASHI, Korekata, 10,000 yen to MITO, and later 10,000 yen to ----."

This written report was later cancelled by the author himself. Actually, the written report does not exist. The fact that the attorney demanded: "Show me that written report", indicated that this information might have leaked out to others. The Chief Procurator stated: "No further complication" and the question on the written report was set aside without further consider-

ation. Recently, the court of justice again asked the Procurator for the written report. Probably this action has been used by the group which is attempting to entrap the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, SAITO. The problem probably will be settled eventually, however, it is better to clarify this matter once and for all.

I told the Chief Secretary and the Minister of Justice: "This matter should be brought up at the next Cabinet meeting and, if possible, settled. It will be too late to withdraw the case once it becomes generally known."

I heard that all Cabinet members had been informed by the Minister of Justice of his desire to clarify this matter at the next Cabinet meeting, which will be held on the 28th.

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Chapter 195a
(6 February 1936)

Hull Offers Advice

Translated by Lieut. Khe-Beng Chiong

When I met the Foreign Minister on the 31st, he stated: "The incident in which about a hundred Japanese army officers and enlisted men in Manchukuo made their escape to Russian territory, and in which four officers were killed and many disarmed by the Russian is still banned from newspaper publication. Of course, I do not have full knowledge of this case; however, the case is being kept secret to prevent further complications." I also heard that Major General DOIHARA finally had become an adviser to the new North China Government. Hoping to acquire more information on the outcome of AIZAWA's court-martial, I had OKABE come over to my house. The anti-Soviet tactics seem still to exist, as I had expected. As far as I have heard, there are a good many judges from the MAZAKI group who attempt to entrap the UGAKI and MINAMI group and at the same time to protect MAZAKI.

OKABE and I were quite worried over this matter. OKABE seems to have a certain amount of sympathetic feeling toward the young officers, but I reminded him that he should be more careful. I met the Director of the Metropolitan Police on the same day. He informed me that the gang which was connected with the Shimpei-tai incident had been released from prison. They have been maneuvering here and there since their release; however, special precautions have been taken to prevent any further trouble. The Director of the Metropolitan Police further informed me that there were some young

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officers from the 1st. Division who attempted to stir up something prior to their departure for Manchukuo. The head of this group, DEGUCHI, who threatened to assassinate the Inspector General of Military Education, WATANABE, is a good friend of General MAZAKI, who came from the same prefecture as General MAZAKI. DEGUCHI merely stated: "The job was plotted on nobody's behalf", and refused to give any further information.

On the 30th Admiral NOMURA and Admiral KOBAYASHI came over about noon and we had lunch together. They stated: "As far as the Navy is concerned, I do not think we have to worry too much. There may be a few who will be aroused and taken in by non-military personnel, but that is nothing serious."

That evening I was invited to KONOYE's place along with Admiral TAKESHITA and KIDO for supper and later to hear from Admiral TAKESHITA. Since I already had been told by Admiral NOMURA and Admiral KOBAYASHI everything that Admiral TAKESHITA planned to say, instead of going to KONOYE's place, I went to see the Prime Minister that afternoon at 4:00 P.M.. The Prime Minister stated: "The legally fixed expenditures of the Ministries of War, the Navy, and Justice have been decided upon in today's Cabinet meeting. The meeting also decided upon the issuance of 6.1 million yen in the Government securities for disaster reconstruction expenditures. The above two items are to be submitted to the Privy Council, and then to His Majesty for approval. The public seems to think that the arguments of pros and cons on my going out to electioneering are confronting me at the present time. Actually, such things do not exist. The Minister of

Home Affairs, who always has deep concern for my health, merely thinks that such political tours are too strenous for my present physical condition.

On the evening of the 31st, Admiral TAKESHITA spoke at the KONOYE residence. He stated: "I discussed the question of U.S.-Japan relations with Cordell Hull and others. Cordell Hull stated: 'Japan has to be very careful, because she is falling into the same category as Germany. It is unwise to imitate either Italy or Nazi Germany. Do not take lightly or overlook Britain. Although she is on the wane, still, she is an old experienced power. The British are a peculiar people, with a tremendous amount of endurance. They deserve all respect as a nation which possesses good political potentiality. Regarding our relationships, at all times good relations should be maintained. It is a good policy for Japan to remain peaceful for the next ten or twenty years.'" "Where ever I went in the United States, people always had something to say about promoting friendly relations between Japan and the United States," Admiral TAKESHITA added.

Admiral TAKESHITA said further: "The United States, of course, has no intention of making war. We should aim at an economic coalition between Japan and United States in the future. At the same time we should watch out for any foolish actions in the Navy." He also spoke very interestingly on the situation in the South Seas Area. The Admiral left a little past 10:00 P.M..

I went on the 2nd to Okitsu, and made my report to Prince SAIONJI on the morning of the 3rd. Regarding the wild rumours about Baron SAITO, the Prince stated:

"He (SAITO) was investigated thoroughly during the SIEMENS case, and nothing was found. I am sure that he will go through all right in this case too." Regarding the Chinese problem, the Prince said: "Regardless of what others say, I still think that CHIANG Kai-shek and LI Hung-chang are the persons next to YUAN Shih-kai."

I gave Prince SAIONJI the translated wire message sent by the new King and Queen of England, which thanked Prince SAIONJI deeply for the message of sympathy sent from the Prince inquiring after the late King's physical condition, and for the telegram of condolence after the King's death.

"Control is essential in any election; I wonder if the Government is well under control," the Prince said. I assured the Prince that the Government is under good control. I left Okitsu on the 4th and went to see the Prime Minister in the afternoon of the 5th to ascertain the matter of 'control' from the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister told me that everything was under good control.

After Minister of Education MATSUDA's death on the morning of the 1st, the Prime Minister immediately asked President MACHIDA over to discuss possible successors. MACHIDA had his eye on TANOMOGI, but the Prime Minister insisted on KAWAZAKI as the new Minister of Education. As the result, KAWAZAKI was decided upon as the new Minister of Education, and the investiture of the new Minister was conducted by His Majesty on the 2nd. I understand that the new appointment has very little effect on the present political situation and that the Seiyukai remains well under control.

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Chapter 195b
(11 February 1936)

Mazaki v. Ugaki

Translated by Lieut. Zhe-Beng Chiong

On the 7th I invited Ambassador ARITA, along with the financial figures who had not been invited to the official residence of the President of the Diet to listen to Ambassador ARITA, to my home for a mutual exchange of opinions. Among them were IKEDA from Mitsui, FUKAI from the Nippon Bank, IZAWA, EGUCHI, NAKANE, IYUKI and KIDO. The meeting lasted until 3:30 P.M..

I met the Foreign Minister on the same day and he stated: "After Ambassador MATSUDAIRA arrives in England, I will have him investigate to what extent we should approach Britain. Before this mission is given to Ambassador MATSUDAIRA, I will have him speak to the British Ambassador to Japan, Mr. CLIVE, concerning a possible return of Leith ROSS (Sir Frederick Leith ROSS) to Japan. With Leith ROSS having a better understanding of our policies Ambassador MATUDAIRA's mission in England will be much easier.

"Leith ROSS, now in China, might put Japan in a very unfortunate position if he should go back to London without a better conception and understanding of Japan. He is a young, central figure of the Conservative Party. With CHAMBERLAIN as its figurehead, his group, along with Mr. Wallace FISHER and Mr. RAMBY is maintaining a pro-Japanese policy."

Without any knowledge of this situation (the Foreign Minister's idea on the return of Leith ROSS), FUKAI said at the luncheon table: "According to the newspapers, Leith ROSS will visit Japan again. I cannot see any

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reason for his return."

"As the President of the Nippon Bank and also of the Specie Bank, you should inquire either of the Government or of the Foreign Minister, on the reasons behind Leith ROSS's visit," I informed FUKAI by telephone.

According to the Foreign Ministers: "Leith ROSS's visit probably originated in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's mind, because the British Ambassador to Japan, Mr. CLIVE, has no knowledge of it. Leith ROSS will bring the personal message of King George VI to His Majesty. Therefore there is a significance in his visit."

When I visited the Prime Minister on the next day, the 8th, he stated: "On the question of financial reconstruction expenditure, some Privy Councillors stated: 'According to Article 70 of the Constitution, that question should be decided in a special session of the Diet; however, other Councillors maintained that since the Government bill was generally accepted, it should be presented to the Diet on the 12th and be published in the Official Gazette on the following day."

The Prime Minister continued: "It was decided that from now on, His Majesty's signature on all diplomatic documents will be changed from 'DAI NIPPONKOKU KOTEI' to 'DAI NIPPONKOKU TENNO'."

That evening I went to the Tokyo Club and met Ambassador YOSHIDA for the first time in a good while. The Ambassador stated: "Please keep the fact that I met General MAZAKI personally to yourself. I did not exactly care, but TSUBOGAMI was quite anxious for me to meet him. General MAZAKI told me: 'I have been under the impression that people regard me as a public enemy. This

misunderstanding is based on the fact that they think I am wholly responsible for propagandizing for national socialism in the Army. According to UGAKI's faction, I have incited the young people to check on the movements of KOISO and TATEKAWA. I am sure that UGAKI's faction will start a revolution to stamp out the movement for national socialism, at least to eliminate it from the Army. With that thought in our minds, we have launched our attack on the UGAKI faction. If the administrative structure which was established by the Army in North China, is successful, they are planning to try out a similar set-up right in Japan. This project is an example of UGAKI and MINAMI's work. 'The soldier and politics basically do not mix. As a member of the Board of Supreme Command, we should be very careful of what we say and criticize on various matters.' This is the principle of the Board of Supreme Command. As long as General UGAKI (a member of the Board of Supreme Command) and his faction deviate far from this principle, our efforts will be continued to stamp out the power of the UGAKI faction. These are the motives that justify our recent actions.'"

Ambassador YOSHIDA continued: "When I inquired of General MAZAKI: 'Why did you fight against the Minister of War, HAYASHI?', he explained: 'My main objection to HAYASHI's argument was that HAYASHI was trying to call TATEKAWA and KOISO back to Tokyo. As the result of my argument with HAYASHI, I was asked to resign my post.' I then asked: 'Why you pay so much attention to TAI, the former commander of the Gendarmerie?' To this question General MAZAKI replied: 'Really TAI is not a bad person, although he is considered a public enemy.'" YOSHIDA added:

"Whenever I meet MAZAKI, he is quite gentle and tries to say the right things."

I told YOSHIDA that General MAZAKI is the type of person who possesses a double personality. For instance, when he (MAZAKI) meets an honest soul like TSUBOGAMI, he is quite impressed and compliments the good things about TSUBOGAMI. On the other hand, when he is defending something, he is likely to do anything. If he is a man of justice as he told YOSHIDA, why did he use such a mean-spirited group as _____ and _____ to plot the assassination of WATANABE, the Inspector General of Military Education? The murderer who was sent by General MAZAKI came from the same prefecture as General MAZAKI and is well acquainted with MAZAKI. Furthermore General MAZAKI stated: 'We are the ones to reform the nation,' while he served as Principal of the Military Academy. From this and other actual instances, you (YOSHIDA) will realize that he (MAZAKI) is not as big as he talks." I also reminded YOSHIDA that he should be more careful and not let MAZAKI deceive him. "Those were the things he told me. Don't worry, he was not fooling anyone," Ambassador YOSHIDA declared.

When the Minister of Home Affairs came over on the evening of the 8th, he stated: "As the result of the general election, the Seiyukai may be ahead, but I do not think that the Minseito will be far behind. If we combine all the members of Kokumin Domei, Showa-Kai and Seiyukai who are holding Government positions, I am sure that the Minseito will be far aheard." He continued: "From the manner in which the court-martial has been carried out, it is easy to see the existence of an anti-

Soviet strategy. I think that this is outrageous." He also said: "General MAZAKI is trying to get himself onto the witness stand. His intention, of course, is to defend himself and at the same time to expose the UGAKI faction to the public; furthermore, to launch his major attack on the zaibatsu. Thus he hopes to stimulate and stir up the public."

On the matter of diplomacy, the Minister of Home Affairs said: "There is an atmosphere in favor of checking up the strategy toward Russia on the one hand, and planning to reform our internal policies on the other. The fact that the Shimpeitai gang has been released on bail is probably one of the indications. Although this gang, together with the NISHIDA gang, have been maneuvering here and there, I do not think that it will amount to very much. Still we cannot entirely overlook the situation. Then what measures should be taken, when the political situation forces reorganization of the Cabinet? To what extent should we maintain relations with the Kokumin Domei? These are the problems we should not overlook."

During a short visit with the Chief Secretary, SHIRANE, he stated: "I was unexpectly called to the Ministry of War a couple of days ago. 'It is unwise to overpublicize the opinions of the Minister of Finance, TAKAHASHI in the papers; the young officers might get a wrong impression,' the Minister of War cautioned."

When I met Lieut. General NINOMIYA on the 9th, he stated: "General HAYASHI, who was sent by the Inspector General of Military Education to attend the court-martial, was trying repeatedly to persuade the Minister of War,

KAWASHIMA, to clarify the following issue: 'The violation of the powers of the supreme command, and all the evidence which had been presented by AIZAWA, did not exist at the time of General MAZAKI's transfer.' Whether Minister KAWASHIMA was convinced by this or not, still remains to be seen."

NINOMIYA told me that the Minister of War, NAKASHIMA, wants to resign from his post and that that particular idea has been bothering him good deal lately. He added: "Major General MORI, a former classmate of Lieut. General NAGATA, who has been a steady attendant at the court-martial, stated: 'I really could not understand what AIZAWA was talking about. I am sorry to say that his (AIZAWA's) primary intention was to stimulate the public and either to tell or be told nice things about himself.'"

The 10th was the day scheduled to have supper with KONOYE, Prince HIGASHI-KUNI, KIDO, and OKABE at the Tokyo Club. Due to my cold, I was unable to keep the engagement. On the same day TANI from the Foreign Ministry came over and gave me the gist of the conversation which he had had with TAI, former Commander of the Gendarmerie. Regarding that he stated: "TAI said: 'I will bail out from all politics and devote my whole effort to studying religion in connection with the fundamental character of our Empire.'"

TANI considers that both KOISO and TATEKAWA are suspicious characters. He (TANI) warned me to be careful toward them. I tend to agree with TANI in this view. As a matter of fact, I consider that KOISO is even more suspicious than TATEKAWA, recalling the relations KOISO had maintained with MORI before and after the May 15th Incident which may had been endorsed by KOISO himself.

Saionji - Harada Memoirs

Chapter 196
(14 March 1936)

Wholesale Murder

Translated by Lieut. Khe-Beng Chiong

After I had stayed in bed for a week due to my cold, I met the Prime Minister on the 20th. He stated: "Ambassador CHTA is making an effort to settle the border (Soviet-Manchukuo border) question, however there still is great difficulty in settling the question of the Amur River. Of course we realized that Russia was not sincere about the settlement. The Commander-in-Chief, MINAMI remarked: 'I will not permit war, and will see to it that a Russo-Japanese conflict is not started by Japan.'" The Prime Minister added that eight Mongolian soldiers were sent to Chita in connection with the closing of eight Soviet consulates located at Harbin, Mukden, Blagoveschensk, Tsitsihar, Manchuli and Heiho." Actually it is not essential to establish both Russian and Japanese consulates in Manchukuo," the Prime Minister concluded.

During the meeting with the Prime Minister next morning, he stated: "The Minister of War suggested that the court-martial should not be magnified more than is necessary. The Vice-Chief of the General Staff, SUGIYAMA, who was in Manchukuo, stated: 'An effort will be made to prevent any conflict with Mongolia. However we should at least give Mongolia a lesson.' To what degree this 'lesson' will be expanded is a matter of great concern. Someone said: 'Russia has taken us so lightly that further reenforcement is essential.' I told the Minister of War: 'Please take a glance at our present financial condition. It is advisable to slow down the

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entire enterprise.' Ambassador ARITA stated: 'I asked the opinions of both the Minister of War and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but I have not grasped the point. As long as CHIANG Kai-shek's plan is not clear to us, there is no use to prepare our concrete plan on China. In the meantime, it is better for me to proceed to my post. Later I will seek every opportunity to return for setting up the policy toward China.' Finally I explained thoroughly the recent development in North China to Ambassador ARITA." The Prime Minister further added: "AKIYAMA, Teisuke has informed the Government that CHAING Kai-shek wishes to enter into a non-aggression pact with Japan. There is a question whether or not we should sent AKIYAMA on this mission. For that reason I have set aside this matter without further consideration."

The following was told by the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, whom I met on the 22nd: "It is doubtful that Britain will make a financial loan to the Soviets, in spite of the fact that the British financial situation is favorable at present. LITVINOV went to Britain to obtain an understanding of the establishment of a Russo-French mutual assistance pact. The pact was faced with severe opposition on account of the failure of the British-German Air Force Agreement. Finally, because of LAVAL, a strong anti-Russia oppositionist, the Russo-French pact was disapproved, in spite of FLANDIN's effort. FLANDIN is considered an authority on the policy toward Russia, and is strongly pro-British.

"Germany's demand on reenforcement of the Rhine defenses was based first on the violation of the Locarno

Treaty; secondly on the fact of Britain's disinterest in the Russo-French relationship. In general, all European nations are making tremendous efforts toward a balance of power. Italy is not capable of achieving a final victory over Ethiopia. With the tremendous amount of hardship that has been imposed upon her expeditionary forces and also with her financial difficulties, the position of Italy in Europe has dropped considerably. As a result, Italy has called upon Germany for assistance. According to the speech given by the Foreign Minister during the Diet session, all ambassadors were ready to return to their posts with complete mutual understanding regarding our foreign policy. I am glad to see that the Army is quite agreeable to our foreign policy, and I realize how fortunate we are in having a Minister of War with a full understanding of our foreign policy. That is, the active faction within the Army is in favour of fighting Russia, while the central faction is trying to work something out in North China. In the meantime, the whole Army is making a five-year plan of military operations against Soviet Russia.

"The Foreign Minister declared: 'At least three years are required for our diplomatic preparation'. That is, eventually China as well as Germany, Italy, and France will be placed in line against Russia either by Japan or by other nations. Until this time arrives, we should not overlook our foreign policy. It seems that the Navy, too, has no particular objection to this policy. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Army and Navy are generally agreed upon our foreign policy, but to what degree the Ministry of Finance would support

this policy and give corresponding financial assistance, we have no idea. It might come to the point that the Minister of Finance has to control the Army's financial demands. Still, the main concern rests now on the existing relationship between Manchukuo and Mongolia. The trouble may not be magnified, nevertheless it is something to think about."

I went to Okitsu on the 24th to deliver the Vice-Minister's statement and opinion to Prince SAIONJI. The Prince has been quite worried over the question of diplomacy since the last visit of Marquis MATSUDAIRA, who took my place during my illness.

During my visit with the Prime Minister on the 25th, he stated: "The President of Kokumin Domei, ADACHI, brought me the following three requests: (1) to speed up the opening of the Diet; (2) the present Cabinet may go on as it is up to the special session, however it should undergo reorganization; (3) the Cabinet should go on in case of emergency without the Seiyukai. I told ADACHI that I agreed to all except the second request."

About 5:40 A.M. on the 26th, KIDO phoned and stated: "The Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, Premier OKADA, and Minister TAKAHASHI have just been attacked. I will hurry to the Ministry of the Imperial Household, since it is impossible to get near the official residence of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. Look after whatever matter comes up in the meantime."

"Go to the Ministry of the Imperial Household first, then phone to Okitsu as soon as possible," I requested.

With the pass (the entrance pass to the Ministry of the Imperial Household) in my hand, I walked to the

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Ministry. I kept my contact with KIDO, while I was in the Ministry of the Imperial Household, and also looked for an opportunity to go down to Okitsu. While I was passing through the gate toward Mitake Hill, I saw a line of soldiers with fixed bayonets about twenty yards away. When I retreated and tried to make my way through in the opposite direction, again there was a line of soldiers with Machine guns.

Immediately after I reached home, I inquired by phone about the safety of KIDO at the Ministry of the Imperial Household. After thirty or forty minutes elapsed, KIDO phoned to tell me that he was quite safe. While I was preparing to make my way to Okitsu, I received various phone calls: "Get out as soon as you can. It is too dangerous to remain there. As long as you are not present, your family will be saved." I made contact with KIDO, while I was sheltering next door. KIDO repeatedly stated: "All members of the Military Council are present but the Cabinet members are too slow in coming in."

I then phoned to MATSUDAIRA, Keimin and asked him: "If you go to the Ministry of the Imperial Household, will you ask KIDO whether or not the Navy is involved in this incident?" He stated that he did not know when he would be at the Ministry of the Imperial Household, and added further: "It is better to go as soon as you can, because the investiture might be held."

I was looking for a chance to make my way to the Ministry of the Imperial Household, but was helpless, realizing that guards were posted in all directions. KIDO said: "We have been in contact with Okitsu. You

had better stay where you are." In the meantime martial-law was proclaimed. The commander and the organization were designated to enforce martial law. We thought that the rebels might soon be brought under control, but they were posted strongly in Nagata-cho and its vicinity.

Not until the 27th was I able to move. At 11:00 A.M. on that day, I started for Okitsu. A car from the Ministry of Railways took me as far as Odawara, and from there I went by train to Okitsu. Realizing the liaison with Okitsu was not entirely reliable, it was important for me to make my way there, and I was glad to have this opportunity. It so happened that SAIONJI, Hachiro (son of Prince SAIONJI) and his son Koichi were with us. Incidentally, Prince SAIONJI had returned from the residence of the prefectural governor on the 27th.

According to a report from Tokyo, progress there was slow. There were some contacts between a certain soldier in Toyohashi, Aichi Prefecture and Colonel HASHIMOTO regarding the incident. The Okitsu police were on the lookout and frequently received reports that there were soldiers in groups (less than twenty persons per group) in vehicles headed for Okitsu.

February 27th passed without much disturbance. On the 28th, KIDO informed me by phone that: "General MAZAKI is trying to persuade the rebels, who made their stand at the residence of the Prime Minister, but among the rebels there were two who would not listen to General MAZAKI. I heard that General MAZAKI finally told the rebels: 'If you do not decide to listen to me by 8:00 A.M. on the 28th, I myself will come to kill you.' General MAZAKI's action was reported at the meeting of the Military Coun-

cil. On the evening of the 27th, His Majesty granted an audience to both General ABE and General MAZAKI. His Majesty inquired sharply: 'Why are the rebels not suppressed by now?' It was a stiff order of course."

KIDO stated: "We should also consider KONOYE as successor to the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. Let us keep that in mind. The public seems to think that the senior statemen's conference (in the presence of His Majesty) will not be held at this time; however we will hold the conference as soon as the Prince (SAIONJI) arrives to Tokyo."

KIDO was very anxious to know whether Prince SAIONJI would come to Tokyo. KIDO also stated: "His Majesty told GOTO, the Home Minister, that His Majesty will receive the resignation of the Cabinet members only after the suppression of the rebels is completed.

On the morning of the 29th, the Board of Chamberlains phoned to deliver the message of Vice-Chamberlain HIROHATA to Prince SAIONJI. The message stated: "Please have Genro (SAIONJI) come to Tokyo as soon as possible. It is His Majesty's wish to consult him on the matter of the next Cabinet. Under the circumstances this message to Prince SAIONJI is delivered in this manner (by telephone) though it is realized that it should be delivered by an Imperial messenger or a messenger from the Board of Chamberlains."

I went to the Prince's residence immediately to inform the Prince. I reported: "A telephone message was received from Vice-Chamberlain HIROHATA, which stated: 'Please come to Tokyo as soon as possible. It is the matter of the next Cabinet.'"

Due to intestinal trouble and symptoms of nervegia, Prince SAIONJI's movements has been restricted considerably. Finally Prince SAIONJI replied: "I realize that I should attend immediately, however it will be truly regrettable, if I were not able to perform my official duty on account of my physical condition while I am in Tokyo. Please give me two or three days." I called HIROHATA on the phone and explained, "Genro (SAIONJI) has received the Imperial message; he wishes to be allowed a few days before he departs for Tokyo."

In the meantime we heard that there were conflicting opinions among the members of the Military Council and also among the Army and Navy officials in Tokyo. To the Imperial request: "Suppress the rebels immediately", the Grand-Chamberlain replied: "It would be regrettable if the word 'rebel' should cause any ill feelings among the troops." To the Grand Chamberlain's request that he withdraw the word 'rebel', His Majesty replied: "Any soldier who moves Imperial troops without my order is not my soldier, no matter what excuse he may have."

The Grand Chamberlain was quite bewildered by His Majesty's answer. His Majesty has taken a severe and stubborn attitude toward the rebels. Frequently the Minister of War has been told by His Majesty: "I will give you only one hour to suppress the rebels." Every 15 minutes, His Majesty calls the Grand Chamberlain to find out whether his order has been executed. His Majesty was displeased by the request that an Imperial messenger be sent to the rebels, who were still making their stand at the residence of the Prime Minister. I heard that His Majesty was informed by Minister of War KAWASHIMA that

the troops will be sent back to the Hara regiment only after the rebellious officers have committed suicide in the presence of an Imperial messonger.

Since both the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and the Grand Chamberlain were absent (i.e. dead) at the time, all action had been taken upon His Majesty's own decisions. In the meantime the opinions among the members of the Military Council varied widely. The majority favored a quick settlement of the incident, in accordance with Imperial wishes. Persons like MAZAKI, ARAKI and others were hesitant in expressing their opinions because they preferred to settle the incident by persuasion based on humanity.

In the meantime, an Imperial order was issued to the Konoye Division. His Majesty was upset over the fact that His Majesty's order did not go to the Commander of Konoye Division directly. KASHI, the Commander-in-Chief, was reprimanded by His Majesty on account of the manner of transmission of His Majesty's order. Finally General ABE had persuaded General MAZAKI of Kaiko-Sha to have the Konoye Division take over the mission of suppressing the rebels. While the matter was progressing, His Majesty ordered: "Do not kill any soldier."

Minister of War KAWASHIMA took measures to comply with the above order. However KAWASHIMA was not clear whether to interpret the Imperial Order as: "Do not kill at all," or: "Avoid any unnnecessary injury." A real effort was made to have the soldiers return to allegiance without violence. Some thought that the fact that the incident was settled without a single shot being fired proved that the Imperial wish had been

answered. However this interpretation was misleading.

Five rooms of the Vice-Minister of the Imperial Household were reserved for Prince SAIONJI and his party. Together with KIDO, I accompanied the Prince, departing from Okitsu on the morning of the 2nd on the "Fuji" for Tokyo. The Prince wore a frock coat, in order to be ready to be received in audience by His Majesty as soon as he arrived. As soon as we arrived at Tokyo Station, at 3:25 P.M., we went to our rooms in the Ministry of the Imperial Household for a short rest. When we were told that His Majesty was ready to receive Prince SAIONJI, he was conducted to His Majesty.

"Think about the next Prime Minister," His Majesty requested. After Prince SAIONJI retired, he met KIDO, HIROHATA, and the Minister of the Imperial Household at the office of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal.

The absence of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal had necessitated that Baron ICHIKI, President of the Privy Council, should take his place from the outbreak of the incident. After a discussion with the Minister of the Imperial Household and the President of the Privy Council for some 2½ hours, we retired to our room in the Ministry of the Imperial Household. KIDO came over again about 8:00 P.M. for further discussion. About 5:00 P.M. a phone call from Prince CHICHIBU at his Palace, invited me to come to his Palace at 7:00 P.M.. I mentioned this invitation to Prince SAIONJI and, with his permission, I arrived at Prince CHICHIBU's Palace about 7:00 P.M.

Immediately Prince CHICHIBU stated: "I cannot agree at all with the Members of the House of Peers who

are maneuvering to place General MAZAKI as Prime Minister in the succeeding Cabinet. Only this morning I mentioned the fact that the total elimination of the evil elements in the Army must be boldly executed to Prince HIGASHI-KUNI, Prince ASAKA and Prince KAN-IN. However I am not sure that Prince KAN-IN fully understood my point. It is certain that General MAZAKI is not a person to be chosen as the next Prime Minister. Sometime I wonder whether it would be better to choose a non-military person for the post."

I told Prince CHICHIBU: "Prince KONOYE should be given consideration; however Prince SAIONJI has not made any mention of this." At the conclusion of my meeting with Prince CHICHIBU, I added: "We are deeply impressed by the attitude Your Highness has taken toward the incident, and also by the frame of mind Your Highness and other princes have maintained in assisting His Majesty. I pray for your good health; please take good care of yourself, even more than in the past in view of future possibilities." I returned to the Ministry of the Imperial Household to convey Prince CHICHIBU's opinion to both Prince SAIONJI and KIDO, complying with Prince CHICHIBU's wish.

When I was granted an audience by His Imperial Highness, Prince HIGASHI-KUNI, at 8:30 A.M. on the 3rd, I learned that His Highness's ideas regarding the reform of the Army were similar to those of Prince CHICHIBU. With the understanding of Prince SAIONJI, I went to each Prince's Palace to extend the following greeting: "Due to Prince SAIONJI's poor physical condition, he will return to Okitsu soon as the official

business is over. I deeply regret that Prince SAIONJI is unable to pay a personal visit to Your Highness."

When I was extending the above greeting to His Highness Prince KAN-IN, he unexpectedly expressed a desire to meet me. I was then led upstairs and was granted an audience by His Highness, who stated immediately: "I am sorry that the Incident has happened. Certainly it was the result of the hugger-mugger policy, which has been exposed. I agree with the general opinion of Princes CHICHIBU, HIGASHIKUNI, and ASAKA, who came over yesterday morning, in regard to the necessity of reforming the Army. I hope that the Prince will submit to the Throne the name of the person to be the next Prime Minister as soon as possible. The longer this decision is delayed, the more complications will develop. No doubt there has been a good deal of hardship on Prince SAIONJI's part, such as making a trip to Tokyo in spite of his poor physical condition. Please extend my very best regards."

In my reply I stated: "I am deeply impressed by the fact that the members of the immediate as well as of other Imperial families are cooperating to serve His Majesty at this time of emergency. Prince HIGASHIKUNI was well pleased, and appreciated Prince SAIONJI's service, and his sincere and serious attitude in serving His Majesty." I added this to Prince KAN-IN, in view of the relationship between Prince KAN-IN and Prince HIGASHIKUNI.

Shortly after I returned to the Ministry of the Imperial Household, I reported to Prince SAIONJI. I heard that the Minister of the Imperial Household also

was impressed by the fact that all Imperial families have taken such sincere and cooperative attitudes in regard to the Incident. The Minister of the Imperial Household stated: "Even a person like Prince KUSHI, who usually remains silent, spoke earnestly to His Majesty, with tears in his eyes, saying: 'As a reserve General of the Army, I feel that it is unexcusable to have had such an incident happen. I have been bothered by the question of how can I render service as a soldier. Although I have done my very best toward this uniform which I am wearing, I am still far from satisfied. With this thought in mind, I can hardly justify myself in interfering in any matter of a non-military nature. But I think that as a reserve General in the Army, there is no excuse for having permitted this unfortunate event to occur. As far as I can remember, I have never seen members of Imperial families cooperate as much as at this time," the Minister of the Imperial Household repeated.

When I was reporting to Prince SAIONJI, he stated: "I have not spoken to you of my opinion in regard to the entire matter. Really I had it in mind to talk with you this morning. Please listen carefully to what I am going to tell you: During the discussion with ICHIKI on the matter of the next Cabinet, ICHIKI wished HIRANUMA to be chosen as the next Prime Minister. As far as I am concerned I cannot recommend HIRANUMA to His Majesty. There still is General KAWAI, but my idea of him is the same as that of HIRANUMA. KIDO seems to have his mind set on KONOYE. If I let my conscience dictate my decision, I will recommend KONOYE

to be the next Prime Minister. What is your opinion regarding KONOYE?"

To that I replied: "The only objection to Prince KONOYE is his physical condition. As far as the influence of the Army goes, it would not be as strong as it was prior to the incident. Since General MAZAKI and General ARAKI are practically considered as rebels by the public, there is less danger of establishing a bad relationship with the Army if Prince KONOYE is chosen to be the Prime Minister."

Soon after I left the Prince, he summoned KONOYE, who came over about 10:00 o'clock. On his way home, after he had talked for two hours with Prince SAIONJI, KONOYE told KIDO and me: "The Prince stated that he has me in mind to take over the next Cabinet, and urged me to accept the post. To my refusal due to my physical condition, which probably would not last more than three months, Prince SAIONJI declared: 'It is not a question of your physical condition. Regardless of whether you will accept or not, I have a right to recommend you to His Majesty. It is not a question of success or failure. It is my deeply rooted conviction that directs my reply to the Throne. Therefore you might as well make up your mind.' I am helpless, since Prince SAIONJI insisted so strongly. Frankly I am in no position to accept the post." I told Prince KONOYE: "Why did you not inform us of the fact that you have no intention to accept the post prior to this time?" Prince KONOYE left with a serious and tense expression.

Afterward, Prince SAIONJI called for us (KIDO and HARADA) and stated: "I told Prince KONOYE a little while

ago that in spite of his refusal, I had made up my mind to submit his name to the Throne, since I still cannot justify the recommendation of HIRANUMA." Thus Prince SAIONJI had taken a determined attitude on this matter.

At His Majesty's convenience, about 2:00 P.M., Prince SAIONJI went to the Palace to make his reply to His Majesty. His Majesty inquired: "What about KONOYE's physical condition?" Prince SAIONJI replied: "There is no suitable person to assume the post but KONOYE."

Shortly afterward KONOYE was summoned to an audience by His Majesty, and subsequently he received the Imperial order: "I command you (KONOYE) to organize a Cabinet, please accept ----." After KONOYE retired, he told us (HARADA and KIDO): "I am in trouble, please let me meet Prince SAIONJI again."

KONOYE met Prince SAIONJI at the Ministry of the Imperial Household to re-emphasize his intention on account of his physical condition. Finally Prince SAIONJI went to the Palace for the second time and reported; " Fumimaro (Prince KONOYE, Fumimaro) has not the confidence to accept the great task on account of his health. In view of the great importance of the times, I withdraw the recommendation with great trepiditation."

After the Prince had left the Palace, he told KIDO and me (HARADA): "Never before have I been placed in such an awkward position as this," and he appeared rather nervous and helpless. Prince SAIONJI's attitude was very serious and so was KONOYE's. All next day Prince SAIONJI remained in deep mediation. With the understanding of

the President of the Privy Council, and YUASA (Minister of the Imperial Household), HIROTA (Foreign Minister) was chosen to organize the next Cabinet.

The vacancy in the position of Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal still has to be filled. Without much thought, KONOYE's name was mentioned casually to His Majesty. To this suggestion His Majesty replied: "The position of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal should be given to a person who has had a considerable amount of experience and who has capability in the field of diplomacy; he should be well acquainted with the present international situation."

This statement was made by His Majesty, as if His Majesty had recalled the previous recommendation of KONOYE. His Majesty readily approved the suggestion of MATSUDAIRA. MATSUDAIRA was then called and was urged by the Minister of the Imperial Household, but he appeared to lack confidence in his suitability for the post and merely replied: "I will think this over." On his way back, he went by the Ministry of the Imperial Household to see Prince SAIONJI, who also urged MATSUDAIRA to accept the post. After his meeting with Prince SAIONJI, MATSUDAIRA came over to our room and declared: "With my little knowledge of internal policy, I cannot accept the position." In spite of his attitude, he again was urged. Finally that evening MATSUDAIRA phoned to give us his real reason. MATSUDAIRA suspected the existence of certain reasons behind KONOYE's refusal and declared: "The public think it was a sort of trick." Really there was nothing unorthodox, or any sort of political game being played in KONOYE's refusal. Ambassador MATSUDAIRA

finally came to the point of understanding, after KIDO shrieked: "This is not a joke, but a serious matter."

After considering the reaction in MATSUDAIRA's mind, it was suggested that the position of Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal should go to the present Minister of the Imperial Household (YUASA), while MATSUDAIRA takes YUASA's place as Minister of the Imperial Household. If that is the case, of course MATSUDAIRA will be in a position to give advice pertaining to diplomacy. This matter finally boiled down to: "If it is possible, the position of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal should be given to YUASA." The matter was then brought to YUASA's attention who stated: "If MATSUDAIRA finally refuses to accept the offer, then I will act." Without any knowledge of this, MATSUDAIRA still would not consider accepting the post. He was then urged to accept the position of Minister of the Imperial Household. Within a single day the entire selection was settled, but only after MATSUDAIRA had accepted the last offer.

On the next day the President of the Privy Council acted as the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal to submit the nomination of the new Minister of the Imperial Household to the Throne; he in turn submitted the nomination of the new Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal to His Majesty. Thus the organization of the personal attendants upon His Majesty was settled.

In regard to HIROTA, Prince SAIONJI stated: "For the position of Prime Minister, HIROTA is decided upon. Let me know his intention regarding acceptance without delay." Complying with Prince SAIONJI's request, I phoned KONOYE about 11:00 o'clock and stated: "Send

Ambassador YOSHIDA to learn HIROTA's intention." KONOYE replied: "Under such tense circumstances, you may count on me to do my very best." Shortly after that KONOYE called on YOSHIDA and had him visit HIROTA to learn whether HIROTA would consider accepting the position of Prime Minister. At 2:30 A.M. KONOYE received the news that there was a possibility that HIROTA might accept the post. At 4:00 A.M. KONOYE phoned and stated: "HIROTA and YOSHIDA will come over to my place at Mejiro tomorrow at 10:00 A.M." On the same day at 11:30 A.M., KONOYE finally reported: "If the Imperial order is handed to HIROTA, he will accept." Prince SAIONJI as well as others were very much pleased over this. At 3:00 P.M. Prince SAIONJI was granted an audience by His Majesty and reported: "Please issue an Imperial order for HIROTA to form a new Cabinet."

HIROTA was received by His Majesty at 4:00 P.M. and subsequently was ordered to form a new Cabinet. We met HIROTA and Prince SAIONJI at the office of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal immediately after HIROTA had received the Imperial order. The headquarters for organizing the Cabinet were to be located at the official residence of the Foreign Minister. HIROTA also wished to use several rooms in the Ministry of the Imperial Household. To that request I protested: "Absolutely no, people might think that you are plotting something." It was finally agreed that he would use only the residence of the Foreign Minister.

Prince KONOYE was called to assist in the selection of Cabinet members, but for one reason or another over half of the initial selections were rejected by

the Army.

The following reasons were given by the Army:

"NAKASHIMA is disqualified because he has poured out financial assistance to a certain political party."

"SHIMOMURA of Asahi (Newspaper) is not a man to be a Cabinet member."

"YOSHIDA is disqualified because he is a brother-in-law of a senior statesman," or "because of his connection with the Castle incident."

After midnight on the 8th, KIDO phoned to SHIMOMURA and stated: "In general the selection of the members of the new Cabinet has been accepted by the Army; however, the Army's last comment was: 'The new Cabinet members from a political party should be limited to one instead of two as stated in the original request.' It is impossible to accept this condition."

TOGO, the Chief of the Asia Bureau, came over on behalf of HIROTA. TOGO stated that the entire matter was far from settled; various objections have been given by the Army to the selections for Cabinet members. These objections were mainly based on various newspaper articles. On the 6th General TERAUCHI and General KAWASHIMA stated: "It is unpleasant to see both SHIMOMURA, Hiroshi and NAKASHIMA, Chikuhei enter the Cabinet. The position of the Minister of Home Affairs is not advisable for KAWAZAKI either. We neither consider that OBARA should remain in his present post, nor that the position of Foreign Minister should go to YOSHIDA."

The statement given out by both generals did not give us the clear picture. If requests are reasonable, we shall comply with them. It was decided to have further

negotiation with General TEDARA on coming Saturday and Sunday.

The following statement was given by HIROTA to General TADARA and Admiral NAGANO, the former classmate of General TEDARA (Middle school): "After YOSHIDA resigns, I will take over as Foreign Minister, in addition to holding my own position."

With the full approval of the Army, the final selections were made as follows:

Home Minister: NAGATA

Finance Minister: BABA

War Minister: TERAUCHI

Navy Minister: NAGANO

Commerce and Industry Minister: KAWASAKI

Education Minister: YOSHIDA, Shigeru

Communications Minister: TANOMOGI

Agriculture and Forestry Minister: SHIMADA

Justice Minister: HAYASHI

Overseas Affairs Minister: YUKI

Railways Minister: MAEDA

The next demand from the Army was in regard to the matter of determining the national policy. Both internal and external policies were to be set up to cope with the present emergency. The suggested external policy was as follows: "To secure the right to play the leading role in Eastern Asia. To maintain friendly relations with world powers. To disregard any concrete plan toward Soviet Russia. Instead, to solve the Soviet problem with the existing policy. The policy toward China: to bring about a shift from an anti-Japanese to a pro-Japanese attitude; to lead China away from falling into parasitism

toward European nations."

"Would the Premier approve these policies?" The Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal asked TOGO, who replied: "Premier HIROTA will approve the outline of external policy you gave, since it has been the policy of our Foreign Ministry."

In regard to internal policy, the Army demanded: "Fulfilment of our military defense. Adjustment of our taxation policy. Stabilization of the standard of living. Control of the economic system. Clarification of the national constitution. Reenforcement of thought control. Promotion of civilian aviation. Allowance of 800,000,000 yen for Army annual expenditure."

"Would the Premier approve this demand for Army expropriations to cover the period from 1937 to 1940 inclusive?" To this HIROTA replied: "It is very difficult to agree to that last request, because besides the appropriation requests from the Navy and the Army, the appropriation for the general national defense still has to be provided. Of course the Government will try its best to fulfil your request." The Army did not press its appropriation request any further.

In regard to the Army's demand that party representation be reduced from two places to one, HIROTA stated: "There would be no objection, if this demand had not come in so suddenly. In addition to my personal promise to the major parties, the Government cannot overlook the Diet's decision. I (HIROTA) wish that the Army would reconsider this request." The Army finally agreed to give HIROTA a reply in regard to the number of party representatives in the Cabinet by 9:00 A.M.

next morning. Premier HIROTA told the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal that if the Army did not yield on this request, the organization of the Cabinet would not be accomplished.

KIDO stated: "My original plan was to have you (HARADA) come over to-night, but that would be too conspicuous. Try to come over about 7:00 o'clock to-morrow morning."

In regard to the physical movement of Prince SAION-JI, my personal idea is this:

One disagreement usually brings another problem to solve. That just means that Prince SAIONJI must reside at the Ministry of the Imperial Household (he is now living at a house of SUMITOMO). In view of this, it is only proper to have SAIONJI, Hachiro go by SUMITOMO's house about 6:30 A.M. and go along with Prince SAIONJI to the office of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. At 8:30 A.M. next morning, I left the residence of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal after discussing various matters with him. I went to see Prince SAIONJI who seems rather worried. At 11:30 A.M. that morning we first learned that the Army had agreed to the original plan for party representation (two seats per major party). Subsequently, the final formation of the new Cabinet was announced.

Still there was some opposition from KUHARA's faction in the Seiyukai: "Instead of selecting SHIMADA or MAYEDA, get YAMAMOTO, Teijiro, who contributed a good deal on the question of the clarification of the national polity," or: "Of course I (KUHARA) cannot very well select myself, however I (KUHARA) rather wish to be a member of the Cabinet." These suggestions and disagreements

had come to the end after a long discussion lasting from noon to 7:00 P.M. We were quite concerned over the various disagreements within the Seiyukai, and feared that the Army might withdraw War Minister TERAUCHI from the present Cabinet on that account. Fortunately KUHARA's opinion did not carry much weight, and subsequently the Seiyukai was brought under control in regarding to the selection of new Cabinet members. Thus, with the full approval from the Army, all problems that had arisen from the 26th to the 9th of the following month had been solved.

The new Prime Minister was given three articles, when he submitted the names of his Cabinet members to His Majesty at 7:00 P.M. on the 9th. The three articles were:

1. To carry out policy in accordance with the Constitution.

2. Our diplomacy should be based on international comity; should not be too aggressive.

3. Do not precipitate any sudden change in financial and internal policies.

The Prime Minister was further instructed by His Majesty: "To take these three articles as the fundamental policy of the Government."

After the investiture, the first Cabinet meeting was held late at night. During the meeting the Premier stated: "When I submitted the list of new Ministers to His Majesty for approval, His Majesty gave me three articles to guide the future policy of the Government." All Ministers seemed to understand thoroughly the instruction of the Premier during the Cabinet meeting.

Next day, when the new Cabinet members came over to greet Prince SAIONJI at his residence, Minister of Railways MAEDA suddenly took off his glasses, with tears in his eyes, and stated: "The Empress Dowager granted an audience to each of us. During the visit the Empress Dowager stated: 'You have my sincere sympathy in the many hardships you have gone through. I wish to extend my congratulations in regard to your appointment as Minister of Railways. During the present emergency, please take good care of yourself and try your utmost to serve the nation.' All of us were very much impressed by the Empress Dowager's thoughtful words, and felt a strong determination to carry our responsibilities to the best of our abilities."

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Chapter 197
(20 March 1936)

Hirota's Cabinet

Translated by Lieut. Khe-Beng Chiong

After all necessary preparation and arrangements for police protection in Shizuoka-Ken had been completed, Prince SAIONJI's departure was set for the 12th. After spending most of the day in greeting various people, Prince SAIONJI left Tokyo Station on the "Empress" for Shimizu at 10:30 A.M. the following day and arrived at Okitsu safely about 1:30 P.M. I remained in Okitsu on the 14th and came back to Tokyo on the 15th.

When I met the Prime Minister on the 15th, he stated: "Gradually all the Cabinet members are getting together and they are trying their best. Relations with the Army have been kept in good shape. One question still remains to be solved: the selection of the Minister of Education. Whether the post should go to OKABE or to HIRAO still is undecided. However, OKABE recommended HIRAO for the post and the Army has added weight to his recommendation by saying: 'Full approval for HIRAO, who was recommended by OKABE.' The only objection I have to HIRAO is that he comes from a business family and the Ministry of Education seems far from his field." The Prime Minister continued: "I asked KONOYE to make the necessary negotiations on this matter, but I have not received any reply yet. Therefore do you mind asking Prince KONOYE's opinion in regard to this matter?"

I went back to Okitsu and immediately after my arrival I phoned KONOYE in regard to this matter. Prince KONOYE favored HIRAO but he seemed a little hesitant

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to make his decision on HIRAO. On the 17th, the Prime Minister phoned: "Still the matter is not decided. Someone suggested Dr. HOZUMI for the post. I am going to submit the written statement to the Cabinet meeting on the 17th. The written statement will be studied and debated by all Cabinet members during the meeting."

About 5:30 that afternoon, I was working on the matter pertaining to the correction of His Majesty's signature in compliance with the Army's request. However, an abstract written statement was finally finished.

There was no new development, when I called the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs over the phone. I reported the general situation to Prince SAIONJI on the 17th at Okitsu. Prince SAIONJI inquired sharply: "What is the idea of changing His Majesty's signature from DAI NIPPON KOTEI to KAI NIPPON TENNO?" When this matter was submitted to the Privy Council, it was explained by the Privy Council as follows: "The change of His Majesty's signature was brought about by reactionary sentiment. The reason why we have such a problem today is that 'KOTEI' is primarily derived from a foreign term."

In regard to the correction of His Majesty's signature, Prince SAIONJI stated: "According to the literature, His Majesty's name has been known as both NAI (interior) TENNO and GAI (exterior) KOTEI since the TENCHI era (662-672 A.D.) Once SHIRAI, Hakuseki stated: 'As the sovereign in the Imperial Court, His Majesty's name is TENNO, while as the head of feudal government (shogunate) His Majesty's name is KING.' The more we

talk about this, the more confusing it becomes."

On the 18th, when I called the Prime Minister on the phone, he stated: "We are feeling out the reaction of the Army toward Dr. OZUMI. Personally, I do not think that he will be accepted."

There was no new development later when I phoned to the Foreign Ministry. The next morning I went to see Prince SAIONJI. During the discussion of different topics, Prince SAIONJI reminded me: "Don't forget to send flowers to the official funerals of the late Minister TAKAHASHI and the late Minister SAITO."

On the 18th I returned to Tokyo and I met the Prime Minister on the 19th. The Prime Minister stated: "The selection of the new Minister of Education is still under consideration." I mentioned to the Prime Minister that certain precautions should be taken on the general tendency of the Cabinet Investigation Bureau. I further reminded the Prime Minister that the other day I had given the War Minister, TERAUCHI, a few warning suggestions against the Cabinet Investigation Bureau through Ambassador MUSHAKOJI.

After the visit with the Prime Minister, I went to KIDO's place on my way home. KIDO stated: "The other day I went to Ambassador MATSUDAIRA's place and spent an evening discussing the general situation in the Ministry of the Imperial Household with MATSUDAIRA, Keimin, HIROHATA, and KIDO. People may talk about this get-together, but we made the meeting appear as if some alumni from the Peers' School were gathered for a good time. Since the Grand Chamberlain probably has to resign under the circumstances, we tentatively

decided that MATSUDAIRA, Keimin should be appointed as his successor. This decision, however, is to be kept in great secrecy. When I called KONOYE on the phone afterward, KONOYE suggested NAGATA as the Minister of Education, with OKABE as Minister of Overseas Affairs or in some other similar position.

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Chapter 198
(27 March 1936)

Okada's Escape

Translated by Lieut. Khe-Beng Chiong

One of the most amazing things in connection with the last incident (February 26 Incident) was the news: "Premier OKADA alive". The news was hard to believe, when we heard it for the first time on the evening of March 26th. Afterward we heard personally from OKADA about his escape. Since it occurred amidst great confusion, OKADA's story of his escape may not be absolutely accurate. It was told as follows:

OKADA was in bed when the house-bell rang. Soon after, his brother-in-law, Colonel MATSUO, Renzo and a house policeman, DOI were awakened by the bell and by shouting just outside the house. They went over to wake OKADA, who had not heard the alarm. OKADA could not tell exactly what had happened at first, but soon he realized that something was coming from the direction of his Japanese porch. Suddenly, someone switched on the light in the room, which brightened the corridor. Afraid of being spotted, OKADA opened a sliding door facing south toward Tameike (section near OKADA's residence). With a house policeman posted just outside the door for security and guided by Colonel MATSUO, OKADA attempted to escape to the garden. At the instant when Colonel MATSUO jumped out of the door, a shot was fired at the policeman who fell instantly to the ground. Leaving the fallen policeman behind, OKADA, Colonel MATSUO, and DOI all crossed the garden and entered a bath-room which had been used as a storage room for empty bottles. OKADA buried himself in a big pile of

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empty bottles. The rebels must had heard the noise, becuase they closed in toward the bath-room. Both Colonel MATSUO and policeman DOI were using chairs from the dressing-room to cover themselves, as the footsteps and noises of the rebels progressed in their direction. Soon after they realized that it was too dangerous to remain in the dressing room, they got out of the place, leaving OKADA behind. He remained silently in the old bath-room. DOI, the house policeman, was shot during the escape. The house policeman does not sleep in pajamas but usually wears trousers when he sleeps..

Colonel MATSUO was mistaken for the Prime Minister because he was accompanied by the house policeman who was easily identified by his trousers. After DOI fell, Colonel MATSUO made his second rush to the first sliding door, where he was fired upon. OKADA heard Colonel MATSUO cry out: "Banzai, they got me", when he fell. This exclamation and the fact that the Colonel was accompanied by a house policeman, made the mistake in identification very easy. Actually, Colonel MATSUO and the Prime Minister were very much alike in both face and age. The corpse of MATSUO was then carried to OKADA's bedroom. All this was observed diagonally through the window in the bath-room by OKADA. After MATSUO's body was laid on the bed, a framed photograph of the Premier was taken down by the rebellious soldier for further identification. After the rebellious soldiers were satisfied that they had assassinated the right person, they all left the room with three shouts of "Banzai", in the full conviction that they had taken the life of the Prime Minister.

Okada's Escape

The Prime Minister still vividly recalled the May 15, 1932 Incident. Thinking that this incident would not last very long, OKADA started to come out from the bath-room. He approached DOI and raised him in his arms. DOI's last words were: "Don't come out yet, sir. Please hide", and he passed away. OKADA then moved toward the bedroom where Colonel MATSUO was laid, to get his hakama and haori. Someone from the other room suddenly barked: "Who is there?" These rebellious soldiers were already convinced by the fact that three shouts of "Banzai" had confirmed that they had taken the life of the Prime Minister. For that reason, they did not seem to make any effort to determine who was coming into the room. When the Prime Minister came to the bath-room, he found two maid-servants there. The maid-servants' quarters are quite large for two maids. The Prime Minister was led forcefully by these two maid-servants into their quarters. The closet in the maid's quarters had already been searched and articles were scattered about. The two maid-servants had forced themselves into the empty closet.

The little room behind the closet had been used by the house policeman. From this little room OKADA heard someone making a report by telephone to his regimental headquarters: "The Prime Minister has passed away in his bedroom." The Prime Minister thought that the incident would be over as soon as the rebels withdrew as was the case in the May 15, 1932 Incident. Hearing the telephone conversation and the report to the regimental headquarters, he was worried, because he thought that the entire regiment might be involved in the incident.

His worry reached a climax, when he heard the arrival of troops from the Konoye Division. He was worried in regard to the safety of the Palace, but the words: "Konoye troops", had frightened him even more.

When the maid-servant took a quick glance into the room, some rebellious soldiers were seen there. While they were wondering why the rebellious soldiers remained in the room, some gendarmes came into the room about 8:00 o'clock for the first time. When the gendarmes entered into the maid-servant's quarters, they found two maids crying and pressing their backs against the closet.

"Hey, are you hurt? You had better put some medicine on", the gendarmes shouted at the maid-servants. However, the maids kept crying, since they did not know whether these gendarmes were trying to help them or were just rebellious soldiers. Soon after, the gendarmes left the room.

About an hour later some more gendarmes came and this time they were quite rough. OKADA was helpless when they tried to force the closet open. He thought of getting out of the place and resisting as much as he could, rather than remain inside the closet and wait to be killed. With that thought in mind, he jumped out and shouted: "Do as you please". The gendarmes made some gestures, dofinitely indicated that they did not come to hurt him, and asked OKADA and the two maids to remain in the closet. OKADA and the others were quite impressed by their friendliness and reentered the closet. There were two of the Premier's private secretaries, FUKUDA and SAKOMIZU in the Premier's residence. Both secretaries were fully convinced that the Prime Minister had been assassinated,

and they said to Lieut. KURIHARA: "Allow us to offer incense before the remains of the Premier." In reply Lieut. KURIHARA remarked: "The Premier has ended his life in a most spectacular manner."

The secretaries were led to the bedroom. When they unveiled and gazed upon the body, their surprise was great indeed to find that it was Colonel MATSUO instead of the Premier. The gendarmes said to the secretaries: "Probably it is the Premier", to which the secretaries replied in the affirmative. The secretaries then requested the gendarmes to let them speak to the maids. The secretaries were led by the gendarmes to the maids' quarters. The gendarmes further stated: "There is someone still alive here." With all the information the gendarmes gave them, the secretaries could not determine whether that living soul was the Premier or merely a poor old man.

The secretaries decided to see the maids, and it was then that they were assured that the Premier was safe. In this relieved state of mind, they returned to their homes, after telling the gendarmes that they would bring some food over a little later. Shortly after the secretaries brought some food over; they were led by the gendarmes as far as the door and they asked the gendarmes to give the food to the survivors. "Be patient, they will come to get you out very shortly", the gendarmes said to the Prime Minister, who was quite impressed by their friendly gestures.

Every moment seemed terribly long to the Prime Minister, who was waiting for someone to get him out. Finally, three soldiers with rifles and fixed bayonets

came over and told the maids: "This is no place for you to stay over-night, especially among the soldiers." The maids replied: "We have no home to go back to", and refused to move. "Don't be so stubborn, there is a secretary's place you can go to." As the soldiers talked to the maids, they tried to pull them by their hands out of the closet and at the same time the closet door was forced open. When OKADA jumped out of the closet again, the soldiers were surprised; they stepped back and locked the door from the outside and stated: "You may stay here; we will talk to the gendarmes so that you may ask for some food when you get hungry."

One of these three soldiers hurried to the residence of the secretary and reported: "The Prime Minister is still living; I personally saw him." The secretary already knew that since he had sent food over, and merely replied: "Thank you" and: "What is your name?" The soldier casually replied: "I will not mention my name but just want to tell you that I am a graduate of a private university." The secretary understood well why the soldier had taken this attitude.

The death of the Prime Minister had already been officially announced to the public. The Government officials had not seen the corpse and there was a possibility that the Premier might be captured. As far as the Government was concerned the fact that the Prime Minister was alive was entirely unknown. So GOTO was appointed to act as the Prime Minister temporarily.

The evening that the news reached the Government officials, a question was immediately raised as to how the Prime Minister was saved, since no one really knew

just what had been going on in the residence of the Prime Minister. They were confronted with the question of how to help Premier OKADA escape from the danger zone. The problem was puzzling, because they had no idea as to the number of rebellious soldiers in the Japanese room. Also, whether only one of the gendarmes was friendly or all the gendarmes were friendly to OKADA was entirely unknown to them.

On the 27th a Navy officer complained: "It is rude to leave the body of Premier OKADA like that." The chiefs of bureaus (Navy) began to burn incense to pay their respects to the Premier. In order to prevent these Navy officers from learning the identity of MATSUO, his face was dressed with a bandage. The gendarmes brought a mask to OKADA and stated: "Please put this on, when you go out. We will come to get you out as soon as possible." OKADA felt relieved. The Navy officer gave the secretary the following instruction: "There will be more Navy officers coming over to offer incense to the Premier. The next time they come, I want you to mix about ten civilians in the room. We will get OKADA out while both Navy officers and civilians are present."

They then gathered ten people of approximately the same age as OKADA and mixed them among the Navy officers in the room. The Premier's son, a student of the Navy Intendance School, was instructed prior to their entrance into the residence as follows: "Do not touch the dead body, nor show even the least surprise at whatever may happen."

OKADA then asked one of the gendarmes to bring his

formal suit with the miniature decorations on it, since he planned to be received in audience by His Majesty soon after his escape. While the ceremony of burning incense was going on, a gendarme rushed out to the porch and shouted: "This old man got sick after seeing the body. Quick! Call a motor-car to the porch." SASAKI's car pulled up the porch, and the Prime Minister, with the mask on, was carried by the gendarmes into the car. Thus he escaped from his own residence without arousing any suspicion.

The motor-car which SASAKI drove was not a usual one to enter the Ministry of the Imperial Household. The fact that they did not have a pss and that both the secretary and the driver had no knowledge of how to enter from the other gate forced OKADA to change his original plan of seeing His Majesty. In the meantime, OKADA decided to stop at the residence of SASAKI, a son-in-law of OZAKI, Yukio. SASAKI was surprised to find that the dead man he intended to pay his respects to was riding in his own car.

Early in the evening of the 27th, OKADA phoned to the Ministry of the Imperial Household from SASAKI's residence saying: "I wish to be received in audience by His Majesty." To his request, they replied: "Good, we will go after you," and promptly notified both the Chief of the Metropolitan Police and the Commander of Gendarmes. As the arrangement was progressing for the departure to the Ministry of the Imperial Household, the Army protested: "Wait until we quell the rebels' resistance."

On the 26th, the Government railways had carried

approximately 4,400 to 4,500 soldiers. The 27th was the day on which the Prime Minister made his escape from his residence, and it also was the day when the rebels had their big celebration-drinking, singing without their shoes, and decorations at Koraku. In such a peaceful atmosphere, the Army did not bring up any further re-enforcements during the day of the 27th. On the 28th approximately 4,000 and several hundred troops were brought by railway. From this troop movement by rail, we can see that the Army did not have a precise plan, due to the lack of information on the 26th.

On the morning of the 27th, the Imperial order was issued. In the meantime the Army had taken measures, attempting to persuade the rebels to return to the loyal forces without bloodshed. It was their alternative plan to settle by force, in case the rebels refused to obey the Imperial order. On the other hand, the rebellious force was planning counter-measures, such as harakiri or letting the soldiers return and the officers commit harakiri, etc.

On the same day the Army stated: "It is unwise for OKADA to be received in audience by His Majesty, especially when the rebels agreed to return today. There is a great danger that the young officers might send someone to assassinate OKADA."

To this warning the Prime Minister replied: "I understand what you mean; it is my duty to settle the Incident. In order to prevent any further complications, I shall wait until to-morrow." Thus it was decided that he be received in audience by His Majesty next morning at 9:00 o'clock.

Okada's Escape

Next morning matters were still in confusion. When a phone call from the rebels was intercepted, KITA, Kazuteru and Lieut. KURIHARA were identified. It was known then that to return was not the plan. Instead, the rebel planned to make a stand. On the 28th it was decided to place the Imperial order to the rebels' hands for the final show-down. If there should be violence, of course it would not make any difference whether OKADA comes out or not. Really, it was possible for OKADA to meet His Majesty then; however the matter was postponed to next day at the request of KAWASHIMA and Commander KAORI who wanted to make further investigation. On the 29th the public was informed of: "Premier OKADA's Miraculous Escape", for the first time, after OKADA had been received in audience by His Majesty.

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Chapter 199
(28 March 1936)

Russian Tactics

Translated by Lieut. Khe-Beng Chiong

When I met the Prime Minister, he said: "The Minister of War told me that he wished to bring the entire case including the court-martial, to an end by the time of the Imperial Birthday." He further stated that the fact that Ambassador YOSHIDA has been placed on active duty as Ambassador to Great Britain has created a certain amount of unpleasant atmosphere in the Ministry of Home Affairs as well as in other Ministries. It would be agreeable to him (Prime Minister) if YOSHIDA would be satisfied to be a member of the House of Peers. Personally, I felt the same way. In regard to YOSHIDA's case, the Prime Minister suggested: "Drop in to YOSHIDA's, if you can; try to persuade him on that."

In regard to the selection of a Minister of Education, the Prime Minister stated: "NAGATA, Hidejiro was considered to be a liberal and was disapproved by the Army. Therefore it is impossible to recommend NAGATA as Minister of Education. We have no alternative but to make OKABE our selection."

After I left the Prime Minister's place, I went to visit Ambassador YOSHIDA. He stated: "My only ambition is to see the establishment of the HIROTA Cabinet. I have no intention to be a member of the House, a Minister, or an ambassador. It will not satisfy my honour if you try to persuade me to be this and that. I prefer that you merely leave me alone. I shall be perfectly satisfied with that. I wish you to understand

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perfectly that I really have no intention to get into any public position." I returned with the thought in my mind that this matter should be left entirely to the Prime Minister's decision. Afterward I discussed this matter fully with the Prime Minister.

It just so happened that that day was the day of Count UCHIDA's death. I met Vice-Minister SHIGEMITSU at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on my way home from my call at Count UCHIDA's home to offer condolences. Vice-Minister SHIGEMITSU said: "Russia has taken energetic steps to encourage the Chinese Communists to resist Japan. We may reasonably assume that China will rely on Russia increasingly as time goes by. Japan has never taken China seriously. We should take careful consideration of our internal situation too. If we treat China too harshly, it will only swing China that much closer to Russia. There is sufficient reason to believe that: 'Stir up China' is a slogan that has been used by Russia to oppose Japan." Thus he seems quite concerned about our future development.

On the same day I went to visit the President of the Kogyo Bank. To him I said: "Even though you and our new Minister of Finance have different opinions, still I think that it is important for you to give him your co-operation so as to overcome the present crisis." As I talked to him he seemed quite agreeable.

I returned after I had discussed various matters with the Chief Secretary. While I was making my oral report to Prince SAIONJI on the 21st at Okitsu, Prince SAIONJI inquired: "How was the question of a Minister without portfolio been settled?" I replied: "I have not

heard any decision on that matter." The Prince went on: "I think it is better to choose a man of broad vision to be the next Grand Chamberlain. As far as personality and other things are concerned, MATSUDAIRA, Keimin is just the person for the job, but I think that his point of view is not sufficiently broad. It is essential to look for a person with breadth of view, insight, and an understanding of human nature."

Prince SAIONJI continued: "Once while ICHIKI, MAKINO, the Grand Chamberlain, and I were drinking tea at a tea-party given by His Majesty, I stated: 'When my house was built, it caused some disturbance as to what direction the oven should face, but I simply decided to build the oven in the direction which I considered most convenient.' Some one remarked: 'It is only you who can afford to do that. As for us it is impossible.' When ICHIKI asked: 'Why can't others afford that?' I merely answered: 'Other people have the idea that they may have to sell their houses in the future; it is much easier to sell a house with the oven built in the proper direction. They wouldn't do the same thing as I did.' As I told ICHIKI, my explanation made him laugh. Well, it indicated that some people seem to worry over a little thing like that. The episode, however, does not prove much of my point; nevertheless it happened."

When I talked over the phone with the Prime Minister, he did not have much to say. The question of the Grand Chamberlain and the death of the Lord Steward to Her Majesty the Empress was brought into our conversation. When I phoned to KIDO regarding the successor of the Lord Steward, KIDO suggested the Vice-Minister of

the Imperial Household, OTANI. KIDO was really serious about OTANI as the successor. I conveyed this matter to Prince SAIONJI.

I arrived in Tokyo on the evening of the 23rd. The next morning I met the Prime Minister who stated: "The Research Association does not think much of OKABE; for that reason probably KEISHO would be a better selection as the successor of the Minister of Education." The Prime Minister evidently had decided on KEISHO and planned to meet him when he came back from Atami that afternoon at 2:00 o'clock.

After I discussed matters with the Prime Minister at his official residence about 10:00 P.M. that day, I secretly met Minister of War TERAUCHI in the Prime Minister's room. The Minister of War complained: "The total reform of the Army is my primary motive, but I am afraid that I do not have sufficient strength to carry this out." As I encouraged him: "Prince SAIONJI respects and appreciates your constant efforts", he seemed quite pleased. The Minister of War, further stated: "For some time, I have thought of asking you to advice IKEDA of the Mitsui Corporation that if the military police should go to interrogate him, he should be perfectly frank about everything; the amount and through what channels he had given out the money extorted by threats. (Money given out to support February 26, Incident) Otherwise, he will make my task of cleaning up the Army even more difficult." Furthermore, the Minister of War stated: "Dr. UZAWA made a statement: 'Prince SAIONJI was informed on the 25th of the Incident of the 26th;' and: 'KUMAGAYA will be questioned on

this point by the military police. He also should co-operate in this investigation.'"

On the same day, I made a phone call to Mitsui hoping to see IKEDA, but since he was not in, I met NANJO at the Gomei Company instead. I conveyed the message from Minister of War TERAUCHI and had him visit TERAUCHI at Oiso. On my way home I met KODAMA, the President of the Specie Bank. During the discussion on various aspects of the current situation, he stated: "I am hoping that the new policy of BABA, the Minister of Finance, will go smoothly. I would be glad to co-operate from behind the scenes; anything to overcome the present financial crisis."

On the evening of the 24th, I stayed at Yugawara, and on the 25th, about 4:00 P.M., I met the Prince at Okitsu to discuss various matters with him. I met him again in the morning of the 26th. I left for Tokyo on the "Fuji" about noon that day. When I met the Prime Minister in the afternoon of the 27th, he was quite concerned over the death of the late Minister of Commerce, KAWASAKI. The Prime Minister also suggested: "Perhaps Admiral KOBAYASHI is the person to be Governor-General of Formosa."

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Chapter 200
(9 April 1936)

The Navy and Russia

Translated by Miss Miwako Yanamoto

On the morning of the 28th, the Prime Minister said: "I am going to see the President of the Minseito and discuss the matter of a successor."

In the evening of the 26th, I returned home from a wedding party, and was told that SAIONJI, Hachiro had called from Okitsu during my absence: "Please phone me, as I have urgent business." I immediately phoned Okitsu and was told: "There was a notice from martial law headquarters of the Third Division, and from the Third Division of the Kempei squad of Shizuoka. It said: 'There is a situation of unrest again around Tokyo. In any event, we must be very cautious.' Therefore, the Kempei squad leader brought along seven or eight kempei to Okitsu to be on guard. This was also increased by many policemen. They say that it is very disquieting in Tokyo. Since Baron SUMITOMO is also in Tokyo at present, please have precautionary measures taken for him. And you be careful, too."

I thought that this was very strange, and I phoned the Chief Secretary of the Cabinet and the Chief of the Metropolitan Police Board. They said: "The young officers at Yokosuka were very indignant over the fact that people like Vice-Admiral KOBAYASHI, Shosaburo, and Captain YAMASHITA were placed on the reserve list. There is a rumor that there is no telling what they will do, but it probably won't be serious." It seemed that the matter had not developed to the extent reported by martial law headquarters.

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Further, I phoned SAKAMOTO, Chief of the Tokyo Kempei-Tai, and asked him directly about the matter. He said: "The situation at Yokosuka is disturbing. Although I did not think it would go to the extent of involving Prince SAIONJI, I reported it for caution's sake." I immediately phoned Okitsu, called Hachiro, and told him that: "It does not look very serious." Since I had a warning: "You must not stay at home for the next two or three days," I inavoidable had to stay somewhere else. The next day I asked a group of admirals and was told: "The Navy says that the young officers have been appeased, and, that in general, this unrest has already quieted down." Therefore it seems that the agitation took place before this.

The complaints of the young men were: "Minister OSUMI resigned before he had done what he should have done, and made the present Minister carry it out. Furthermore, Admiral OSUMI has not resigned as War Councillor nor has he retired. Still, he made Admiral YAMAMOTO resign." Thus one faction is very indignant. Therefore it seems that the ones who were being sought at that time were former Navy Minister OSUMI, present Navy Minister Admiral NAGANO, Vice-Minister HASEGAWA, and also former Prime Minister OKADA. They spread a rumor, somewhat exaggerated, that: "We will kill all those that the rebelling Army men fail to get." It seems that this had scared the martial law headquarters.

From the first I have thought that the Chief of the Kempei-Tai at Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture, was a henchman of the former Chief of the Military Police, HATA, and that there were many underlings in the non-commissioned

ranks who work for HATA. These men have established liaison with Yokosuka and tend to talk deliberately about matters in an exaggerated way to bring uneasiness to the minds of the people. I thought that it was probably that way, but for caution's sake, I didn't speak too harshly. However, in general, I think that it was just as I imagined.

On the 28th, I phoned the Chief of the Kempei-Tai again. He said: "It seems that the matter has gradually subsided. The young officers were said to have submitted a stipulation to the Government, saying: 'If you do not grant this stipulation, there is no telling what will happen.' However, according to the actual facts given by members of the Navy, there was no such thing. The fact that Vice-Admiral KOBAYASHI, Shosaburo had gone to Hakone and that the young officers had visited him there and had gathered at Captain YAMASHITA's place had again been exaggerated." On the one side, the Kempei of the Army have said: "The Navy has also come", and they had a funny idea of trying to balance the matter with the previous act of the Army.

In the morning of the 28th, I visited the President of the Bank of Japan and talked with him on various matters for about an hour and a half. I said: "Regarding the actions of the new Finance Minister, I would like to have you make the best of the situation in this period even though your opinions may differ somewhat and help him so that the Finance Minister can avoid as many errors as possible." President FUKAI replied: "That is as it should be." President FUKAI said: "The idea of finance capital seems to be very mistakenly understood

by the public. Generally speaking, finance capital is made up of the comparatively small deposits of the middle class in trusts or in banks. Big money is invested in other places and is not left as deposits in banks. Therefore, it is very wrong to think that only very big capitalists rely on finance capital. Many things are said from this mistaken conception, but such views are very distressing."

On the 29th, I visited the former Chief of the Metropolitan Police Board and the former Home Minister to thank them for their assistance while in office. On the 31st, I met the Prime Minister. He said: "I have decided, after all, to bring in Dr. OGAWA, Gotaro, as Minister of Commerce and Industry." He also stated: "Dr. OGAWA, Gotaro and Finance Minister BABA are very good friends."

Later I went to the Foreign Ministry to meet the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, and I also met the Chief of the Police Bureau for the first time. I returned after telling them about the Navy incident at Yokosuka, etc.

In the evening of the 31st, I went to Okitsu. I saw Prince SAIONJI on the morning of the 1st. I told him about the general situation at Tokyo. I also related to him that Councillor TANI had spoken to Lt. General OKAMURA of General Staff Headquarters at the time this Cabinet was organized. The truth of the matter is that when the HIROTA Cabinet was being organized, Lt. General OKAMURA suddenly called Councillor TANI, as he was secretly worried that there was no one to use as liaison in various matters. He told TANI: "I am thinking of purging the Army soon, but it is awkward with the present

type of personnel. I do not necessarily have antipathy against HIROTA himself, and I want you to understand that I am not saying that Prime Minister HIROTA is not suitable." I had heard that TANI had reported this to the Cabinet forming headquarters. I told Prince SAIONJI at that time.

On the 2nd, Ambassador ARITA was going to Tokyo through Shizuoka. I rode with him on the "Fuji" to Numazu and discussed various matters with him. Previously, Prime Minister HIROTA had requested of me that: "Since this is a critical period, please tell him over and over that the next time he is urged to become Foreign Minister, he should accept it without reserve and without hesitation." I told Ambassador ARITA about this. I just answered Ambassador ARITA's question as he asked them about the situation at the time of the organization of the Cabinet. Ambassador ARITA said: "On the whole, I have thought that I should eventually accept it. However, I cannot really give my consent until I have heard further about the true situation since the organization of the Cabinet and learn of the circumstances." I turned back at Numazu, and returned to Tokyo at noon on the 3rd.

I went to the wedding reception of Vice-Minister of the Navy HASEGAWA's daughter. There were many admirals, vice-admirals, rear-admirals, and captains of the Navy present. I asked them about many things. I was told: "The Yokosuka Incident is already settled, and there was nothing serious in the Navy."

On the morning of the 4th, IMAIDA, Chief Civil Administrator, came to call. Previously Prince SAIONJI had said: "Even if, by some chance, Governor-General UGAKI

should resign, we must ask that he be quite discreet even after he resigns. It would be distressing if he were to become a second HIRANUMA." Therefore I explained this well to him. I also cautioned the Chief Civil Administrator strongly, saying that important persons, whether in official position or not, were slowly disappearing. At present, when Prince SAIONJI is quite old, his desire that people like General UGAKI be especially discreet on this occasion stems from his concern for the Emperor and the nation. That is why he is anxious about such matters.

I met Lt. General NINOMIYA and said to him: "From time to time, when you have the chance, I would like you to tell me just what things the members of the Army are demanding, and just what the ultimate goal is." To this Lt. General NINOMIYA replied: "Just before the present political change took place, a representative of field officers' rank called on UGAKI, Governor-General of Korea. He said: 'If, by any chance, an Imperial Command should fall to Governor-General UGAKI, we request first of all a purge of the Army, and second that the national defense expenditures be made fully sufficient. Third, we have nothing special to say about the administration, only that the Finance Minister should be pretty careful. It would be annoying if he like TAKAHASHI, curbed the national defense expenditures unduly.' Generally speaking, isn't that vaguely indicative of their aspirations?"

Incidentally, he also stated: "At the time of the February 26th Incident, the officers of the rebelling troops, that is to say, the leaders, woke the Prime Minister at his official residence about 6:00 A.M. While they

were negotiating with the Prime Minister, General MAZAKI was already there in the next room. Further, General MAZAKI and Admiral KATO, Kanji went together to the home of Prince FUSHIMI, Fleet Admiral. They said: 'Baron HIRANUMA is the man to stabilize the present political situation.' They also made a request saying: 'We would like to have MAZAKI under him as War Minister. We would like to have you relay that to the Emperor.' The Prince, naturally, did not convey the message. However, when he left for the Palace, Admiral KATO and General MAZAKI followed after him.

Further, they sent as messenger, Major General ISHIMARU, a reserve officer from the same prefecture as General MAZAKI, to the home of HIRANUMA, Vice-President of the Privy Council. They sent him with the request: 'I think that the person who can stabilize the present political situation is General MAZAKI. However, since MAZAKI does not know politics, we earnestly request you to come out. Then, we ask that MAZAKI be made War Minister in the HIRANUMA Cabinet.' However, Vice-President HIRANUMA was absent as he had gone to the Palace. Therefore, Lt. General HIROSE, who was in charge during his absence, heard this and relayed it to HIRANUMA."

On the 4th, I met the Prime Minister, and he said: "I am afraid that the timing of Governor-General UGAKI's intention to resign is quite a question." The Prime Minister also stated: "Day before yesterday, I met the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. The Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal said: 'I had an audience with the Emperor, and I felt that it was his desire to have Governor-General UGAKI continue in that position.' The Lord Keeper

of the Privy Seal was to convey the Emperor's wish to IMAIDA, but I do not know what happened after that."

On the 2nd Ambassador ARITA returned to Tokyo, and that very night, the investiture was held and he assumed the post of Foreign Minister. On the 5th, I met with Foreign Minister ARITA. He told me about the discussions he had had for two nights with the Chief of Staff and other staff officers of the Kwantung Army. He stated: "There is strong inclination to influence the Central Army group. In short, we must give a lot of thought to the problem of Russia, especially now that the naval officers are saying: 'Up to now we have been engrossed in contemplation of war with the United States. However, we have come to Manchukuo and seen many things, such as that the Russian Navy has assembled submarines at Vladivostok and has placed planes there to provide for a sufficient air force. Now, from a military angle, the Navy must first decide what to do with Vladivostok rather than with the United States. On this point, we have come to agree unanimously with the Army.'

"The Kwantung Army has a pretty strong opinion on the situation. When Commander MINAMI resigned, they not only carried on a movement to retain him, but at the same time they phoned the General Staff Headquarters directly. According to someone who knew the situation, General UEDA bluntly said: "There is no use in bringing up such a matter." From this, I think that perhaps General MINAMI must have become quite a 'robot'."

Minister ARITA was worried and said: "We must somehow 'change the combination' of staff officers there."

On the 6th, I met KIDO and he said: "It is hard to

find someone suitable for Grand Chamberlain. At present, the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal is constantly in consultation with the Emperor. Therefore the next Grand Chamberlain need not be sought for that purpose so long as he is a man capable of handling any serious situation that might arise. The Grand Chamberlain need only supervise the Board of Chamberlains." He also stated: "Thinking over various aspects of the situation as it stands today, I wonder if Marquis SAIGO wouldn't be one of the candidates?" We parted after he further stated: "Regarding the matter of appointing MATSUDAIRA as Chief Secretary to the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, there is the problem of the present reformation of the House of Peers. KONOYE had a desire to leave MATSUDAIRA and SASAKI in the House of Peers."

Later I met and conversed with the Prime Minister. About noon I visited Prince KONOYE and then took the afternoon train for Okitsu. I saw Prince SAIONJI on the morning of the 7th and reported upon various matters. Then I told him KIDO's idea regarding the Grand Chamberlain. He had some doubts about the matter saying: "I do not think it very good for me to interfere by saying this and that. In any case, it would be distressing to have anyone who compares unfavorably with SUZUKI, former Grand Chamberlain. I myself do not know Marquis SAIGO very well. From the little I have heard, he is a splendid person, but I wonder how he would turn out. When you return to Tokyo, tell KIDO: 'He (SAIONJI) was quite worried about the Grand Chamberlain.' Also tell him: 'If there is absolutely no one, why doesn't KIDO himself take it?'"

The Navy and Russia

He (SAIONJI) was also worried about the attitude of the War Minister (TERAUCHI) on the purge of the Army. He said: "Generally speaking, it is fine that Minister TERAUCHI is doing his utmost. However, wouldn't it be better in the long run if the punishment of the rebelling soldiers were meted out quickly and severely so that the public will say he did better than they had expected?"

That day I talked over the phone with the Chief Secretary of the Cabinet at Tokyo. It seemed that the National Deliberation Council was to be abolished and that an administrative official of the House of Peers had been decided upon. Further, I phoned the Foreign Minister, and he said: "My back is still bothering me so I am in bed, but I am in very good spirits." We cut the telephone conversation with his statement: "I shall have HORIUCHI for Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs." I returned to Tokyo in the afternoon.

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